

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, NATO, SP
SUBJECT: SPAIN-NATO

REF: (A) USNATO 5794; (B) MADRID 4571

1. OUR OWN COMMENTS ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SPAIN WITH REGARD TO THE ISSUE OF NATO MEMBERSHIP ARE CONTAINED IN REF B, WHICH WAS SENT BEFORE WE HAD HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE REF A. WE ENDORSE THE USNATO RECOMMENDATIONS (PARA 14, REF A) LOOKING TOWARD A GENERAL ALLIED DISCUSSION IN JULY AND A MORE DETAILED EXCHANGE IN THE FALL, BUT WOULD CAUTION THAT THE PARALLEL SPANISH CONSIDERATION OF THIS ISSUE WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE TO BE RATHER SLOW-PACED.

2. OFFICIAL SPANISH INTEREST IN THIS ISSUE NOW FOCUSES ON (A) A DESIRE TO OVERCOME A LACK OF IN-DEPTH INFORMATION OF THE ALLIANCE; AND (B) A WELCOMING OF CLOSER CONTACTS WITH THE ALLIANCE, NOT ONLY BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH THE ALLIES, BUT CONTACTS AS WELL WITH NATO ORGANS. WITH RESPECT TO (A), THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS INDICATED TO US ITS WISH TO STRESS AS A PRIORITY ITEM INFORMATION WHICH WILL ENABLE A
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CAREFUL ANALYSIS OF THE ECONOMIC PROS AND CONS FOR SPAIN OF MEMBERSHIP. WE ALREADY HAVE UNDER WAY, IN COOPERATION WITH THE OFFICE OF THE DEFENSE ADVISER AT USNATO, AN EFFORT TO ESTABLISH ACCURATELY THE PRESENT LEVEL OF SPANISH DEFENSE EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP ON THE SAME BASIS USED BY THE ALLIES. THIS IS A USEFUL BUT RELATIVELY MINOR CONTRIBUTION. MORE IMPORTANT WILL BE OUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE THE SPANISH GOVT WITH

INFORMATION AS TO THE ACTUAL BUDGETARY EXPERIENCE OF NATO MEMBERS WHICH MAY BE RELEVANT TO THE SPANISH CASE. TO DO THIS EFFECTIVELY WILL REQUIRE THE COOPERATION OF SELECTED ALLIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN THE SOUTHERN TIER. ANY ACTION THAT COULD BE TAKEN IN THE ALLIANCE TO ENCOURAGE A FORTHCOMING POSTURE WOULD BE HELPFUL TO US IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

3. WITH RESPECT TO (B) ABOVE, SPANISH OFFICIALS REMAIN ACUTELY SENSITIVE TO SLIGHTS, REAL AND IMAGINED, FROM THE NORTH AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO REACT WITH LESS THAN FULL ENTHUSIASM TO A SUGGESTION THAT, NOW THAT THEY ARE WELL ADVANCED ON THE PATH TOWARD PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY, THEY CAN EXPECT ONLY BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH ALLIANCE MEMBERS. SPANISH OFFICIALS WHO ARE FAVORABLY INCLINED TOWARD THE ALLIANCE AND WITH WHOM WE WORK ON THESE MATTERS, INCLUDING THOSE AT A HIGH LEVEL, WOULD FIND IT EXTREMELY HELPFUL TO HAVE SOME INITIATIVES FOR CONTACTS TAKEN BY NATO OFFICIALS.

4. WE WOULD OFFER A FEW ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE ON THE DISCUSSION REPORTED IN REF. A. WITH THE HOPE THAT THESE MIGHT ALSO BE USEFUL:
(A) WHILE AT THE OFFICIAL LEVEL IT IS STILL STATED THAT SPAIN INTENDS TO APPLY FORMALLY FOR EC MEMBERSHIP, THERE IS NEVERTHELESS GROWING IRRITATION AT ALL LEVELS, INCLUDING POLITICAL, AT THE NEGATIVE, AT TIMES UNFRIENDLY, POSITIONS TAKEN BY FRANCE AND ITALY AGAINST SPANISH EC
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MEMBERSHIP BECAUSE OF AGRICULTURAL DIFFICULTIES. THE QUESTION THEREFORE IS RAISED IN SPAIN AS TO WHETHER IT IS IN SPAIN'S INTEREST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEFENSE OF A EUROPE THAT APPARENTLY REJECTS SPAIN AS AN INTEGRAL MEMBER OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY;

(B) IT IS FIRM SPANISH POLICY NOT TO BE PLACED IN THE POSITION OF SOLICITING MEMBERSHIP IN ANY WAY WHICH WOULD MAKE THE SPANISH APPEAR TO BE COMING HAT-IN-HAND TO THE ALLIANCE;

(C) THE SPANISH GOVT. IS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO SUBMIT THE NATO MEMBERSHIP ISSUE TO AN ACTIVE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE PRIOR TO ANY DECISION. SOME POLITICAL ELEMENTS, LARGELY THOSE OPPOSED TO MEMBERSHIP, HAVE ALSO SUGGESTED A NATIONAL REFERENDUM;

(D) WE ARE INCLINED TO SEE WISDOM IN THE SUGGESTION BY THE FRG AMBASSADOR (PARA. 6, REF. A) THAT TO "WAIT IN A POSITIVE SENSE" MIGHT PROVE THE BEST ALLIED TACTIC AT LEAST IN THE NEAR TERM. SUCH A POSTURE NEED NOT RULE OUT INITIATIVES SUCH AS THOSE SUGGESTED IN PARAS. 2 AND 3 ABOVE. STABLER

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